

NWPAAC



\$ 1.00

August 1987
Volume 4 - Number 8



Newsletter of the Combined Atari User Groups

The President's Printout



There's quite a bit of news to report this month. First of all, a computer fair is being put together by some of the local retailers to be held at Thomas Mall September 11-13, 1987. Booth space is being provided to the club and we have decided to participate by setting up an 8-bit and ST display. This fair will take the place of our regular September meeting. In other words, our September meeting will *not* be held at our usual place (Faith United Methodist Church) but rather will be replaced by our activities at Thomas Mall. We encourage everyone to come on out to the mall and enjoy the fair. We also are in need of some volunteers to man our booths. This would involve several hours at the Mall demonstrating Atari computers and answering questions from users and potential buyers. This is also a great opportunity to acquire new members for our club and give NWPAC and SEVAC some needed exposure in the community. If you would like to help out on any of these three days (especially Friday) please contact me or any club officer at the August meeting, or call me at 978-9749. Thanks!

And thanks to Mike Zachary for his excellent presentation on 3D graphics with "Super 3-D Plotter II" at our July meeting. We had an

excellent turnout for a hot summer Saturday and I know everyone had a great time seeing what the Atari computers can do in this exciting graphic area. I hope we can sustain the interest for August.

Our August 8th meeting will be a fun meeting devoted to "Favorite Games". Bring your favorite game (8-bit or ST) to the August meeting and we'll demo it for the group. It can be a brand new game to show off or it can be an oldie but goodie. Whatever your choice, bring it along and we'll have a good time sharing our favorite games.

As mentioned above, our September meeting has been moved to Thomas Mall. October will be our traditional fall swap meet. This has always been a popular meeting and one that everyone looks forward to.

November is tentatively scheduled for a program on 8-bit and ST utilities. From sector editing to ramdisks to you-name-it, utility programs can add a lot to your productivity if you know what's available, how they work and what they can do. At our November meeting, you'll have a chance to find out.

One last thing. Due to last minute work schedules, our July STACK meeting had to be cancelled. I apologize for the absence of a notice at the church but I just wasn't able to contact anyone there. Please note that the August STACK meeting has also been cancelled due to vacations. Our next meeting of the ST special interest group STACK will be Monday, September 14th.

nw **pac**

N.W. Phoenix Atari Connection

An Independent User's Group

se **vilc**

SOUTH EAST VALLEY ATARI CONNECTION

NYBBLES & BYTES

This newsletter is written and published monthly by the North West Phoenix Atari Connection (NWPAC) and the SouthEast Valley Atari Connection (SEVAC).

Both groups are non-profit organizations devoted to the exchange of information concerning all Atari computers. Neither NWPAC or SEVAC are affiliated with Atari Inc.

NYBBLES & BYTES welcomes contributions of articles, reviews, and other material related to Atari computer products. Material to be submitted should be uploaded to the club BBS under the heading of "NEWSLETTER". See instructions below. If you do not have access to the BBS, call the editor to make other arrangements.

Permission to reprint articles in any non-commercial publication is permitted, provided proper credit is given to NWPAC and the author.

Deadline for copy to be included in the following month's issue is the 15th day of each month.

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***** A D V E R T I S I N G R A T E S

Classified ads of a non-commercial nature are free to all current members. Camera-ready commercial rates are:

Full Page	\$30.00
Half Page	\$20.00
Quarter Page	\$10.00
Business Card	\$5.00

***** C L U B B B S

P.A.U.G.S. (Phoenix Atari User Groups)

NWPAC and SEVAC provide a BBS system for its members at 242-4259. The system is operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. BBS usage is restricted to club members or on an exchange basis with other user groups. For additional information, call either Bill Smith at 934-9935.

U P L O A D I N G A R T I C L E S

All text should be in ASCII format. 1st word is suggested for the ST's with the WP mode off. Atari Writer is suggested for the 8-bits.

Pictures, illustrations, etc, can be in either 8 Bit or ST format. However, keep in mind, that since this newsletter is in black & white, certain color pictures will loose clarity in translation. High resolution DEGAS or Graphics 8 pictures will work the best.

NWPAC

NORTHWEST PHOENIX ATARI CONNECTION



FROM THIS CORNER

By Roger Downey

"AMAZING ATARI PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE! OVER 110 LOW COST THEME DISKS AVAILABLE OR FILL DISK WITH PROGRAMS YOU WANT. SEND FOR FREE 8-BIT CATALOG DISK."

This is part of an ad that has appeared in recent months in several computer magazines. The company which placed the ad purports to selling "public domain" programs when the truth is...*some of what they're selling is copyrighted software!!!* First of all, what does public domain mean? In law, the term evolved in reference to a person's domain, or home - hence the idea of "private domain." A copyright is the method a person lays claim officially to his work so the public knows it's not their "domain." A song, a newspaper story, or a piece of software can be copyrighted for the life of an individual plus 50 years. A company retains the rights to a piece of work for 75 years from the date of publication - or 100 years from the time of creation - for works made for hire. No one else has the right to sell, reproduce, or reprint the material during that time without the express consent of the one holding the copyright. An author can dedicate his work to the "public domain" specifically or simply not copyright it when published. Most of the true public domain software has that designation because the author relinquished all rights to it.

I requested a listing of the programs from the company that placed the ad. Many of the names and descriptions of software looked familiar. Some were programs from user club libraries; some were from now-defunct magazines like *Softside*; but others were originally published in *Antic* and

A.N.A.L.O.G. magazines which still exist.

Disk #015, the "BBS Hits/Analog III" disk according to the company, lists games like *LIVEWIRE.OBJ*, *RETROFIR.OBJ*, and *BRIKLAYR.OBJ*. All three are from *A.N.A.L.O.G.* Magazine. "Livewire" - for example - was a magazine type-in game from the July/August, 1983 issue.

Disk #008, the "Antic Special," includes programs like *DEATHSTR.BAS* (Death Star), *ZAHRCON.BAS*, and *ESCHERSK.BAS* (Escher Sketcher). Again, all three were type-in programs. Perhaps the magazines gave the company permission to sell the programs...or, the programs were public domain to begin with...or, the company was violating copyright laws. Those are the three options. Interested in finding out which applied, I called the magazines.

...can we legally list magazine type-in programs on the club's BBS?

Charlie Jackson is the Technical Editor of *Antic* magazine. He also serves as editor of "Antic Online," the electronic magazine on CompuServe. He told me that all programs in the magazine are copyrighted. Jackson added that *Antic* has an exclusive contract with CompuServe to supply programs to Sigatari libraries for use by Sigatari members.

Even though these programs may be downloaded by CompuServe subscribers, *Antic* retains the copyright. And, Jackson emphasized that Publisher Jim Capparell gets angry when he hears that someone is distributing the magazine programs, let alone selling them. I was ready to accept that as "gospel"...UNTIL I examined the April, 1983 *Antic*. In that issue, Capparell wrote an editorial on the magazine's first birthday of publication. Besides announcing that the magazine was now published on a monthly basis, Capparell said:

"We are the only magazine to place our

other BBS's. I don't think *Antic* could legally challenge the placement of the "public domain" games on a BBS because of the editorial comments Capparell made.

COMPUTE! Magazine is the most restrictive when it comes to distribution of its programs. Officials admit it would be difficult to stop one friend from giving another a typed-in program. But, they take a hard line to listing *COMPUTE!* programs on BBS's and say they do pursue companies and individuals who sell their programs as "public domain."

AUTO-LOAD YOUR FILES TO RAMDISK

by JEAN ROWE AND DALE BRYANT

(Reprinted from the SEP/OCT issue of the SBACE Gazette)

Recently, it seems that one of the most popular topics in the magazines and most of the Atari club newsletters that Jean and I are privileged to read is the extended memory of the XE and upgraded XL computers. As we have both of the above, we have been interested in articles about RAMdisks.

If you have an XE with DOS 2.5 and the file RAMDISK.COM is present on the disk at boot time, then a RAMdisk for drive 8 is created at that time. RAMDISK.COM not only formats the D8 RAMDISK it also copies DUP.SYS and writes a MEM.SAV file to the RAMdisk. However wouldn't it be nice to be able to select your own RAMdisk drive number and not only create and copy the above files, but other files you would like to reside on the RAMdisk as well?

To copy a MEM.SAV file to your own created RAMdisk the MEM.SAV file will have to be present on drive # 1. A MEM.SAV file can be created on any RAMdisk by POKEing 5439,ASC(#Dn) and then going to DUP.SYS and creating the MEM.SAV file. DOS will create the MEM.SAV file on the disk number residing at location 5439. We suggest having it present on drive # 1 as the following program will then copy it to the RAMdisk of your choice.

However, the program not only creates

and formats a RAMdisk of your choice. but will also copy all the programs residing in data line 5000 from drive 1 to your RAMdisk.

Remember however that RAMdisk formats to 499 sectors and NOT 707. If DUP.SYS is one of the programs copied to the RAMdisk, the program is set up so that DOS will look for DUP.SYS on the RAMdisk. This is, as we stated above, the same method used by DOS 2.5 if RAMDISK.COM is present on the boot disk.

If you do uploading of files to BBS systems, the following modification might prove useful. Take out the END statement at the end of line 6000 and insert line 7000 as follows:

```
7000 OPEN #1,4,0,"D:AUTORUN.SYS":A=USR(5576)
```

Assuming your modem is set up as an AUTORUN.SYS file, or an AUTORUN.SYS file calls your modem program. Of course, the files you want to upload should have been copied to the RAMdisk first using this program.

Experiment and have fun with your ATARI.

```
0 REM S."D:ANYRAMD#
1 REM -----XL/XE ONLY-----
9 REM
10 REM *****
12 REM *          MODIFIED BY          *
13 REM *          JEAN ROWE &          *
20 REM *
30 REM * THANKS TO BILL WILKINSON *
31 REM *          and to              *
32 REM *          Rick Detlefon        *
33 REM *          of the               *
34 REM *          Austin ACE           *
35 REM *****
40 POKE 1802,3:REM if RAMdisk.COM hasbooted
start over with 2 drives
90 ?")":POSITION 0,0?" RAMDISK MAKER XL/XE
100 REM *****
130 REM * A PROGRAM TO SET UP A RAM *
140 REM * DISK ON Dn:, WHERE n IS    *
150 REM * ANY DRIVE NUMBER FROM 3   *
160 REM * TO 8.                      *
161 REM *****
172 CLOSE #4,4,0,"K:":?\"?\"WHICH DRIVE # FOR
RAM DISK?";:GET #4,K:K=K-48:CLOSE #4:? K:IF
K<3 THEN 11000
190 RAMDRIVE=K:REM CHANGE THIS AS DESIRED
210 POKE 1920,RAMDRIVE
220 POKE 2953,RAMDRIVE
250 REM
262 REM SUBROUTINE AT 500 SETS THE BYTE FOR
LOCATION 1802
265 GOSUB 500:POKE 1802,BYTE
270 DIM INIT$(4) 328 FOR I=1 TO 4:READ DATA
290 INIT$(1)=CHR$(DATA):NEXT I
300 DATA 104,76,224,7
310 INIT=USR(ADR(INIT$))
```

```

320 REM 330 DIM DRIVE$(6)
340 DRIVE$="D#:*.*"
350 DRIVE$(2,2)=CHR$(48+RAMDRIVE)
370 REM INITIALIZE OUR NEW RAM DRIVE
385 ?"FORMATTING RAMdisk ";DRIVE$(2,2)
390 X10 254,#1,0,0,DRIVE$
400 REM
410 REM Verify it worked
420 REM
430 open #1,6,0,drive$
440 trap 470
450 get #1,byte:? chr$(byte);
460 GOTO 450
470 CLOSE #1:GOTO 1000
500 IF K=3 THEN BYTE=7:REM--00000111
510 IF K=4 THEN BYTE=11:REM--00001011
520 IF K=5 THEN BYTE=19:REM--00010011
530 IF K=6 THEN BYTE=35:REM--00100011
540 IF K=7 THEN BYTE=67:REM--01000011
550 IF K=8 THEN BYTE=131:REM 10000011
560 RETURN
1000 REM AUTOCOPY FILES TO RAMDISK
1010 DIM C10$(27),1$(20),0$(20),N$(20),T$(2)
1020 BUF=FRE(0)-500:DIM BUF$(BUF)
1030 C10$=" ":C10(27)=" ":C10$(2)=C10$:BUFAD
=ADR(BUF$):1$="":0$="Dn":REM CHANGE 0$ FOR D
IFF RAMDISK
1032 0$(2,2)=CHR$(48+RAMDRIVE)
1035 GOSUB 11000
1040 T$=CHR$(125):T$(2)=CHR$(127):TRAP 2000:
FOR A=1 TO 27:READ B:C10$(A,A)=CHR$(B)
1045 NEXT A
1050 : :? T$;" RAMDISK COPY ":? T$(2);
" ":? T$(2);"COPYING ....BYTES"
1060 TRAP 6000:READ N$:1$(4)=N$
1070 CLOSE #2:OPEN #2,6,0,1$
1080 INPUT #2,N$:TRAP 1090: A=VAL(N$):GOTO
1060
1090 N$=N$(3)
1100 FOR A=1 TO 8:IF N$(A,A)<>" "THEN NEXT A
1110 1$(4)=N$(1,A):1$(LEN(1$))=""
1120 IF N$(9,11)=" " THEN 1140
1130 1$(LEN(1$)+1)=N$(9,11)
1140 OPEN #1,4,0,1$:? T$(2);" ":1$,:X=USR(A
DR(C10$),BUFAD,BUF,7):CLOSE #1:BUF$(PEEK(85
6)+PEEK(857)*256)+1)=""
1150 ?LEN(BUF$):0$(4):OPEN #1,8,0,0$:? #1:
BUF$:CLOSE #1
1160 GOTO 1080
2000 DATA 104,104,141,85,3,104,141,84,3,104,
141,80,3,104,141,88,3,104,104,141,82,3,162,
16,76,86,228
4990 REM
4999 REM BELOW ARE FILES TO BE COPIED
5000 DATA DUB,SYS,MEM,SAV,ANYFILE
5010 REM DATA RAMDISK.*:WILDCARD COPIES ARE
O.K.
5020 REM DATA
5030 REM DATA
5999 REM LOOK FOR DUP.SYS ON THE RAMdrive cr
eated. If not copied then POKE 5439,ASC("1"
) for drive #1
6000 CLOSE #2:POKE 5439,ASC(0$(2,2)):?:
"Files copied to RAMDISK ";0$(2,2)
7000 OPEN #1,4,0,"D:AUTORUN.SYS":A=USR(5576)
11000 IF PEEK(1802)<7 THEN ? "RAMDRIVE NOT
PRESENT":POKE5439,ASC("1"):END :REM LOOK FOR
DUP.SYS ON DRIVE #1
11010 IF PEEK(1802)=7 THEN DRV=3
11020 IF PEEK(1802)=11 THEN DRV=4
11030 IF PEEK(1802)=19 THEN DRV=5
11040 IF PEEK(1802)=35 THEN DRV=6
11050 IF PEEK(1802)=67 THEN DRV=7
11060 IF PEEK(1802)=131 THEN DRV=8
11070 0$(2,2)=STR$(DRV)
11080 RETURN

```

SYSTEM-80

SPECIAL \$29.97

80 COLUMN WORD PROCESSOR

SMALL SYSTEMS INNOVATION

600 West 21st. Ave.
Apache Junction, AZ.
85220

(602) 983-4523

64K DISK \$49.95

The "System-80" 80 Column Word Processor program for 8-bit Atari Machines. This a "Software Only" System. This means the entire system is Disk Based and you don't have to purchase additional hardware. Your system should have at least 64K RAM. It will run on any 8-bit machine, any Atari compatible disk drive; a T.V. or Monitor; and almost any printer. The monitor gives the best screen and a color T.V. above 19" the worst. On color you must adjust your monitor or T.V. to B&W for the best picture. I had only one monitor that gave me a bad picture; it was a T.I. color. I should point out that the T.I. didn't give a very good picture with the Atari Writer Cart or the A.W. + Disk; either.

At the August 8, 1987 N.W.P.A.C. meeting and on August 15 at the S.E.V.A.C. meeting; arrangements have been made for the President of Small Systems Innovation, Raymond F. Felch III to be present. The program will be offered to members for \$29.97 plus tax. This is 40% less than retail. It is being offered as a one time only deal for several reasons.

1. Get a large number of programs out in the Valley at one time. This will give him feedback fast due to the ease of contacting the company. The more people using it the sooner bugs, if any are found and corrected.

2. ONLY REGISTERED owners will be offered upgrades; those buying at the meeting will register at that time.

3. If the company sells the product to the user groups all the time, at this price, then NO retailer will invest their money stocking the product.

4. It is being offered as a "thank you" for the exposure that the club gave the System-80, during the JUNE Word Processing Demo and the review articles I

wrote and put on the BBSs in the valley.

5. It may not make sense but #s 1 and 2 will slow down the breaking of the protection and subsequent piracy.

6. This is a company that will have some sorely needed 8-bit software. At reasonable prices. Nearing completion is the first upgrade: Mail Merge and a Dictionary. A compatible companion program; an 80 column Data Base will be available in Oct/Nov.

7. This Company will go under if there is wholesale "PIRACY"; if that happens then we get no new 8-bit software.

8. This man can put NEW life into our 8-bit systems, and also increase their worth on the resale market.

"8-BIT POWER" WITHOUT SYSTEM 80

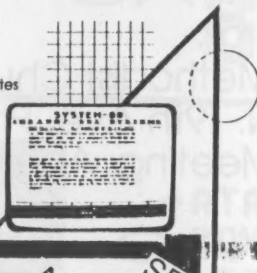
Word Processor

by
Small Systems Innovations

► 80 COLUMN SCREEN ◀

Edit, prepare, store, or print; letters, reports, school papers, resumes records, etc. See the printed page before its actually printed with the 80 column screen feature!

- ☐ DOS compatible
- ☐ Search and Replace Features
- ☐ Cut and paste commands
- ☐ Block moves, Deletes, and Duplicates
- ☐ Customized printer drivers
- ☐ Headers and Footers
- ☐ Automatic page numbering
- ☐ Wait-to-print feature for double-sided printing



NWPAC
AUGUST 8, 1987
SEVAC
AUGUST 15, 1987
Annual Report
Project
Dear Sir:
64 K disk for ATARI[®]: 800/800XL,
65/130XE.
CLUB SPECIAL
\$29.97 +tax MEMBERS ONLY

DO-IT-YOUSELF SURGE PROTECTION FOR YOUR COMPUTER

Copyright (C) 1987 by Garry Jones.

When setting up a computer system, one piece of equipment which might get overlooked is a surge protector. The purpose of a surge protector is to protect equipment from voltage spikes and surges caused by lightning strikes on power lines (c'mon, it never rains in Southern California, does it?), electrical equipment turning on and off (you didn't really plug your computer into the same circuit as your refrigerator, did you?), the crummy wiring in your apartment that your landlords won't fix because they're too cheap, and just plain lousy performance by your friendly local Edison Company.

A surge protector works by clamping the voltage and preventing it from rising beyond 130 volts when a sudden increase occurs. To do this, a surge protector uses a device called a metal oxide varistor, or MOV for short. Of course, you want to know if they wear out, and when they do, how to tell. MOVs do have a finite life, depending on the number and severity of surges they're exposed to. When they fail, they typically create a short which will pop a circuit breaker if one is included in the circuit, immediately shutting off the power and saving the equipment.

Buying a surge protector is something of a problem, since not all surge protectors are created equal. Good ones are fairly expensive (there's plenty of expensive junk out there, too) How do you tell the good from the bad, and what do you do for cash after you spent the last of it on some superwhizbang software for your new computer? Good news for you clever hacker types who can tell a hot soldering iron when you pick it up (by the wrong end): Make your own surge protector. It's easy, it's cheap, and best of all, it might even work.

You'll need a power strip (make sure you get the kind you can disassemble with a screwdriver instead of a hacksaw), three metal oxide varistors (General Electric part no. V130LA20A (which means 130 volts 20 amps) or Radio Shack catalog no. 276-568B), some rosin core solder (DO NOT USE ACID CORE

SOLDER OR FLUX: it will corrode the solder joints in time, ruining them), some miscellaneous tools, like Xacto knives, alligator clips, wire cutters, etc., and a soldering iron. Three hands would be nice, but you can probably manage with two. Most of us do.

Take the back off the power strip and look inside. It probably looks like the drawing shown at right. If it doesn't, don't worry. If it has outlets, wires (three of them?), and a cord, it'll work.

Notice the three wires inside: they're probably black, green, and white. White is the hot wire, green the ground, and black the common.

Now, strip some insulation off the wires as shown in the illustration. Take one varistor and solder one of it's wire legs to the white wire, and the other leg to the green wire as shown. Fasten an alligator clip to the leg being soldered between the solder joint and the varistor to prevent heat damage to the varistor while soldering.

Do the same thing with the second varistor, except it should be soldered to the green wire and the black wire. Solder the third varistor to the black wire and the white wire.

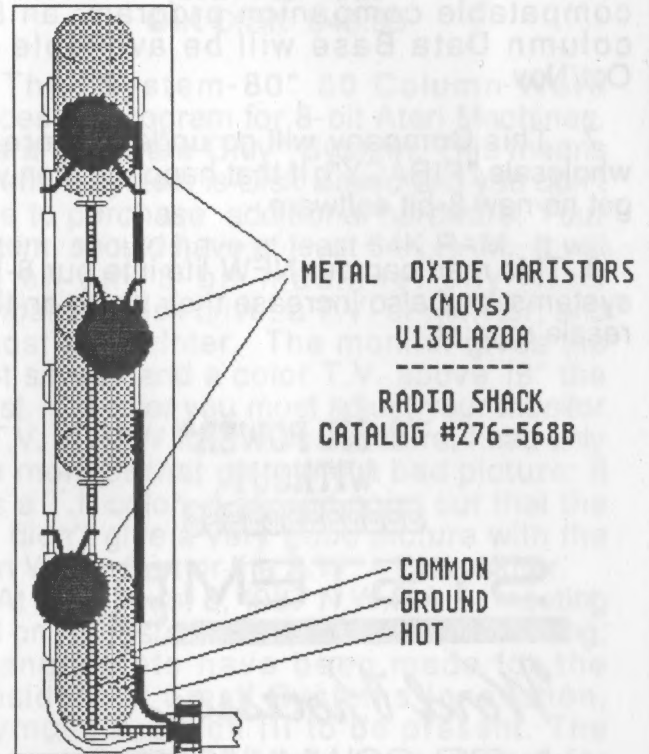
Clean the solder joints with a rag dipped in a little alcohol, and examine the joints. There should be a smooth shiny flow of solder between the wire leg of the varistor and the copper wire in the power strip. If the joint is

dull, lumpy, or flawed in appearance, resolder it. When all the joints look good, reassemble the power strip. Sit back. Relax. You're done now. Wasn't that easy? Can you say, "Easy?" Sure. I knew you could.

-Garry Jones-

Compuserve: 72030,273

GENIE: GXRAY



'Oh, You're in Computers? Say Something in Fortran.'

NWPAC

meets at:

Faith Methodist Church

8640 N. 19th Ave, Phx.

Next Meeting: August 8th at 10 am

SEVAC

meets at:

Eaton Business Park

3234 S. Fair Lane, Tempe

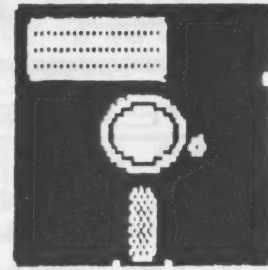
(see map on page 15)

Next Meeting: August 15th at 10 am

No STACK meeting for August.



SOFTWARE
954-SOFT

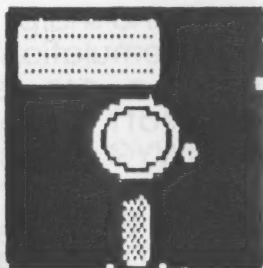


NWPAC & SEVAC MEMBERS : VIP DISCOUNT WITH YOUR
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- ♦ AUTHORIZED ATARI
SERVICE CENTER



4001 E. THOMAS

SEVAC

SOUTHEAST VALLEY ATARI CONNECTION

SEVAC SECONDS

By Tim Barr

Hi folks! I hope that July's meeting on telecommunications was of some interest to you. We are trying to set up some more "theme" meetings, which is why it is important for you to fill out the questionnaire that was published in the July newsletter. I will also try to bring some copies to the August meeting, so that you can fill one out there. Hopefully, by the September meeting I will be able to present some hard data to the membership, and maybe even a tentative schedule for the rest of the year.

At the August meeting we will have a pair of the Antic 3-D glasses available for demonstration purposes. After the end of the formal club meeting, you will be able to try the glasses on. In addition to the glasses, CAD-3D and probably a couple of other graphics programs will be demonstrated.

The ST public domain library is in the process of being reviewed, and updated or revised where needed. There are some programs that need to be updated to the latest version, and some of the disks have duplicated files. I am trying to co-ordinate with the ST librarians from both clubs on this. If there is enough time, I will try to put together a more informative list of what is available on each disk. We may also be reformatting the club disks using the "Twister" type 400K format.

I also hope to have more information about the computer show that has been tentatively planned for September 11-13, at Thomas Mall. The people at Software and PC Systems (of Mesa) are trying to put the show together. If they are able to get the ball rolling, we will need some help, from the club members, to run a booth for the club. The more people that volunteer, the less time you would have to work. A signup sheet will be available at the August meeting.

Well, thats all I have for you for this

month. The August meeting will be at the Eaton Business Park, 3234 S. Fair Ln in Tempe, at 10:00 am on August 15th. BE THERE!!

WORLD OF ATARI FAIRE
SANTA CLARA SHOW DEBUTS -
"FINALIZED" ATARI LASER PRINTER -
NEAR-BETA WORD PERFECT...& MORE

BY NAT FRIEDLAND, ANTIC EDITOR

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With all the other Atari Fairs that took place during the past 12 months and the huge Consumer Electronics Show just three weeks ago, it was surprising to find so much new to see last weekend during the hastily-organized World of Atari Faire at the year-old Santa Clara Convention Center.

But several unfamiliar companies with impressive ST software made their Atari Fair debuts last weekend. And a near-production version of the Atari SLM804 laser printer had its first public showing. This report concentrates on products that have not been reported on previously.

The Atari laser printer is smaller and lighter than most current models, but seems just about as fast and sharp. It was operating in Diablo 630 emulation with a 4Mb Mega ST running a pre-release version of the Microsoft Write word processor with a WYSIWYG display. The laser controller board is in a modem-sized box cabled between the ST's high-speed Direct Memory Access (DMA) port and the printer. This controller box also has a second DMA port for connecting a hard disk.

This 300 dots-per-inch printer supports Atari's GDOS (which automatically uses

Continued on page 14

STORE HOURS:
MON/THURS/FRI
10:30 - 8:00
SAT 10-6 SUN 10-5
CLOSED TUES/WED

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STACK

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MR. DAVE'S RANDOM BITS

David Thorson

Some of you may remember my column from the old Computer Wizards days. Well, I'm at it again. I hope to bring you reviews, technical tips and perhaps even my own jaded opinions from time to time. I have been using eight-bit Atari machines since 1983 and recently purchased an ST (notice I didn't say "moved up to an ST", BOTH machines have their place!) so I'll probably jump from one to the other within the same column. My computer interests are music (Casio CZ-101 and ST MIDI), programming (BASIC XE, GFA BASIC, and a smattering of Forth and C, a career of FORTRAN programming at work, and graphics.

I was a bit dissatisfied to see my "Creative Process" program marked "Limited Stock" in the last edition of Antic's Catalog. I called to find out the story, and they said it was just a ploy to churn up some more interest in the product - they have no current plans to discontinue it. But, and this is a mighty big one, they ARE phasing out most of their eight-bit software. They told me almost no new software would be accepted unless it was of very professional quality. I think they've become enraptured with the ST section of their catalog, where they sell very little software written by ordinary folks like you and me, and lots of stuff developed by dedicated software companies. I've always seen The Catalog as a place where the little guy had a chance for some fame and glory, and the rest of us could get reasonable and often inventive software at a good price. For example: Colorspace, Dragon Quest, Screen Plot and (of course) Creative Process. If you feel like I do about this, call or write Antic and

let them know they are killing off a major source of Atari creativity and utility. I'll step off my soap box now....

I purchased an ST utility program called DO-IT! from QMI on a trip to Utah last March (If you're ever in Provo, check out Lloyd's Computers in the University Mall). DO-IT! is an excellent command shell program. For those of you who don't understand command shells, let's step back a minute. I've been using an IBM (gasp... choke...) PC/AT at work for two years now, and until recently it has never seen windows or a desktop. Anything to be done must be translated into some cryptic form of computer commands, such as
"COPY C:\TOOLS\LOTUS\DATA\
EXPNSRPT.WR1 A:".

This is what I have been "putting up with" for a long time, even back in my old DEC PDP-11/34 days where a similar command might have been
"PIP DX1:EXPENSERP.TXT=DL1:[200,6]
EXPENSERP.TXT".

It looks a lot harder than pointing the mouse to the file you want to copy and dragging the file to another disk or directory. Well, it is harder in some ways, but it's a lot more flexible and faster in other ways.

Suppose I have a window open to the \LETTERS folder of my A: drive, and I want to copy a file from the root directory of my D: drive to my \LETTERS directory. Since I just downloaded the file from GENIE, it's got an ARC extension (meaning it's been compressed by the ARC utility). To make the file usable by STWRITER, I need to do the following:

1. Double click on the D: drive to make it the current drive
2. Double click on the COMMANDS folder of my D: drive where ARC.TTP is located.
3. Double click on ARC.TTP to run it.
4. When ARC's dialog box appears, enter "E \NEWLETR
A:\LETTERS\NEWLETR.DOC".

5. When ARC has finished de-ARCing NEWLETR.DOC, click on the the window close box to return to the root directory of drive D:.

6. Double click on drive A: window to make it current again.

From a command shell such as DO-IT!, I need enter only one command:

```
ARC E D:NEWLETRA:\  
LETTERS\NEWLETR.DOC.
```

Both techniques get you to the same place; which would you rather do? DO-IT! is an excellent implementation of the command shell concept. It is based on the command structure of MS-DOS 2.1, with extensions to take advantage of the ST's features. It contains the usual commands for directory management: DIR, MKDIR, CHDIR, and RMDIR to list a directory, make a new directory (that's FOLDER to all you mousers), change directories, and remove directories. File commands include COPY, ERASE, HIDE, LOCK, PRINT, and TYPE (display on screen). RENAME lets you change the name of many files at one time, a real advantage over the desktop's "ease of use" forcing you to rename files one at a time! System commands include BLACK and WHITE to invert screen colors, CLS to clear the screen, DATE and TIME (display or change), KBDelay and KBRATE to adjust key response, WRAP to force autowrap at the end of a line (similar to a word processor). You can also change how the command prompt is displayed; I have mine set up to show the current directory and time in red letters while everything else is in white letters on a green background. There is also MEM to display the amount of free memory, DSTAT to show drive status (volume name, free space, etc.) and EXIT to return to the desktop (after all, the desktop does have its own advantages). DO-IT! also provides a ramdisk driver and a disk formatting utility, although you can use any similar programs you already have instead. One very important command is PATH. Using PATH, you can tell DO-IT! where to look for any programs it can't find in the current directory. In my example above, I had the path set for D:\;D:\COMMANDS\, so that I could access

ARC and other programs on my ramdisk from ANY FOLDER on ANY DISK without clicking through several windows to get there. This is perhaps the feature I miss most when using the desktop.

The other important feature of DO-IT! is the ability to process batch files. A batch file is a list of commands and programs that you could normally run from DO-IT! that is executed automatically when you type the name of the batch file. To save disk space I like to archive whole directories together and then copy them back to another disk. A simple, one line batch file speeds this process:

```
ARC A %1 A:\%1\*.*
```

 I call this file A.BAT, and keep it where PATH can find it. When I enter "A WHEEL", DO-IT! reads in A.BAT and replaces %1 with the first parameter, in this case WHEEL, resulting in "ARC A WHEEL A:\WHEEL*.*". This creates an archive file called WHEEL.ARC in the current directory, then copies all files from A:\WHEEL\ into it.

Batch files can be as long as you like, and can even include such commands as PAUSE to give you a chance to change disks, and IF commands to compare a character string with a parameter entered on the command line. If you have a batch file called AUTOEXEC.BAT in the directory from which you start DO-IT!, all the commands in it will be executed automatically. Up to nine parameters can be passed to a batch file and referred to within the file as %1 through %9. I found that the ECHO command will display any text that follows it, providing a way to display messages on the screen. The documentation does not tell you this, but since it works on my IBM I tried it on my Atari. No problem!

DO-IT! also supports I/O redirection, where you can tell it to send a program's screen output to a file, or to read all keyboard input from another file, making it possible to automate many other programs.

Command abbreviations are supported, and several commands have a UNIX-like equivalent. For example, DIR can also be entered as the UNIX LS command, and CD can be used instead of CHDIR. Commands such as COPY, DIR and ERASE each have

several options. DO-IT! can also run any program, including GEM programs.

So what does all this power cost? I paid about \$27 for the program, and it only consumes about 11K of memory (just over one hundredth of my 1040 ST's ram).

I keep DO-IT! in the root directory of my D: ramdisk so it's always only a mouseclick and a second away. DO-IT! was written entirely in 68000 machine language by Clinton Parker (the man who brought us ACTION for the eight-bit computers). The program is not copy protected, upgrades are only \$2.50, and QMI has a customer support bulletin board system if you have any questions (or you can reach me through the club BBS).

DO-IT! has only two limitations as seen from my IBM perspective: batch files cannot test if a file exists, and you cannot default the destination of a file copy to the current directory by not giving a destination in the command. The first point is handy if you have an AUTOEXEC.BAT file that copies DO-IT! and several other files, such as ARC.TTP, to a "permanent" ramdisk when you power up your ST. It's nice to move all the files over automatically, once, but whenever I press the reset button the files are copied again even though the ramdisk is still available and the files are on it. The second point is a matter of being spoiled; I would rather type "COPY A:X.PRG" than "COPY A:X.PRG D:" when I'm already in the D: directory.

My conclusion? If you do anything more than running canned software packages (games, word processors, etc.), including file copying or renaming, DO-IT! is a worthwhile investment. If you use an IBM machine, you already know how to use DO-IT!. If command shells are new to you, you'll have no trouble learning DO-IT! and you may be surprised at how much faster you can do certain operations on your ST. Well, that's it for this month. If there's something you'd like me to cover in future columns let me know via the club BBS or at the NWPAC meetings. Keep those bits random!



World of Atari Faire Continued...

the highest resolution available to a printing device). We picked up a selection of the sharp graphics and multi-font printouts that the Atari SLM804 kept churning out throughout the day. Late summer or September is the current estimated market arrival for the Atari Desktop Publishing System.

At a neighboring booth, **Word Perfect** was showing a near-beta version of the forthcoming ST edition of its bestselling word processor. The GEM-based software, due in September, looked extremely fast and powerful. It will list at \$395 but is often discounted by more than 50% in the IBM version. The WP rep said that the company is working closely with Publishing Partner's developers to assure immediate desktop publishing compatibility for the word processor.

Programmers will love Omniware's new **Edit/Booster**, an ST text editor that also generates GEM code by mouse. Select "Draw A Circle" from a drop-down menu and the GEM code appears in your program. The version currently on sale just works with C, but updates for GFA BASIC, Personal Pascal and Modula-2 are promised soon. Omniware, based in Bellevue, Washington also showed a desk accessory controller for the widely used Hewlett-Packard Laserjet printer and an H-P terminal emulator.

Iliad Software of Orem, Utah, another new entry, showed a powerful, user-friendly CAD/drawing program, **Athena II**, selling for \$99.95. Athena requires a 1Mb ST, but functions in either color or monochrome.

Coming soon is a circuit-testing simulation program called **Circuit Maker**.

The company was also showing a multiuser, multitasking operating system, **PDOS**, which is similar to the system used on 68000-based VME workstations.

A wide-ranging product line of specialized business applications for the ST was shown by Hi-Tech Advisors of Winter Haven, Florida. Their \$199 titles

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included **Church Manager**, **Service Station Manager**, **Video Store Manager**, **InventoryPro** and **Sales Pro Plus**. Mail Pro handles custom mailing lists and form letters for just \$69. SBT of Sausalito, California kicked off a line of dBASE III business accounting modules based on the ST's dBMAN clone.

Beckemeyer Development Tools of Oakland, California showed their latest addition, a touch-screen restaurant menu system. The demonstration model for a Chinese restaurant was almost frighteningly complete and efficient.

Two image scanners were shown at the fair. Navarone, of Sonoma, California had a \$1,239 ST system including the Canon IX-12 scanner. The simpler \$99.95 **IMG Scan** from Seymour-Radix of Irving, TX used a small box that tapes to the print head of any dot matrix printer that supports graphics.

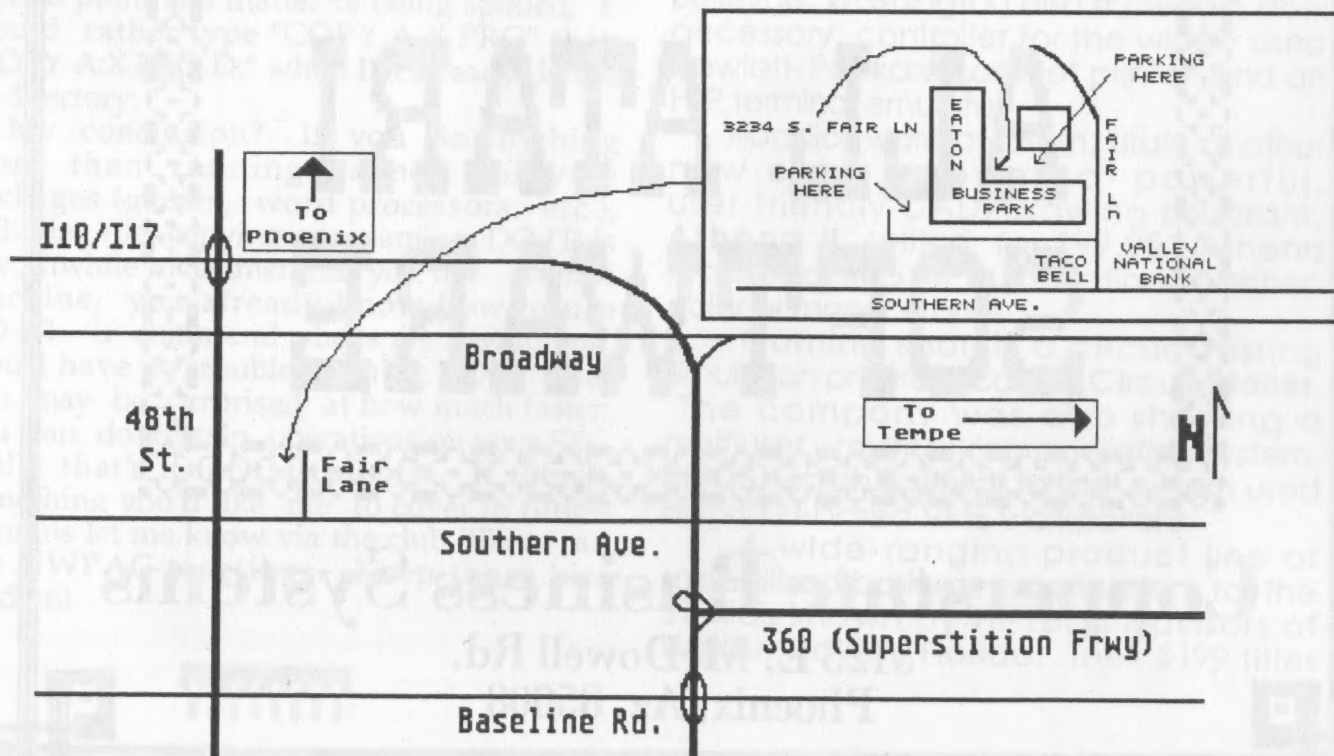
Old-timer Lou Schwing of Astra Systems was gleefully demonstrating the ruggedness of his **HD+** unit which

combines an 20Mb hard disk and a double-sided ST 3.5" disk. The HD+ was notably cool and even kept operating as he waved it in the air and laid it on its side.

DeskCart, a \$99.95 cartridge from Quantum Micro of Liverpool, New York is a real-time clock/calendar with a full set of Sidekick-type desk accessories including a filer, calculator, address book, notebook, macros, RAMdisk driver and other utilities. The cartridge format is claimed to save memory and operate faster.

The World of Atari was busy and profitable for most exhibitors throughout its Friday-Saturday run. The thriving Antic booth was showing upcoming ST graphics software from The Catalog -- **Cyber Paint**, a paint program that creates images for animation with Cybermate, and **Spectrum 512**, a smooth-lined, ultra-clear paint program that can display all the ST's 512 colors simultaneously.

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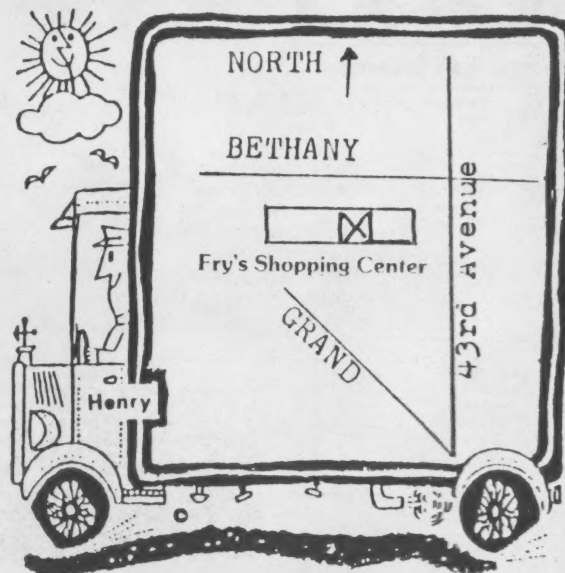
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